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Elvehjem Museum of Art

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The Elvehjem Museum of Art artscene

University of
Wisconsin-Madison
Volume 3, Number 3

In March, members in the Founder and Associate categories were given the opportunity to choose a work of art for the permanent collection. The staff, with the approval of the accessions committee, chose three works of art on paper and asked members to vote for one. The selections were a pen and ink drawing by the seventeenth-century Flemish genre painter Sebastiaen Vrancx, a rare woodcut by the German Expressionist painter and printmaker Emil Nolde, and the French Fauvist Maurice de Vlaminck's woodcut of a bridge at Chatou. The members' first choice was Nolde's *Frau im Profil* of 1910, with the Vrancx drawing a close second.

Emil Nolde (1867-1956) was one of the leading German Expressionists, and an outstanding printmaker. He was introduced to and stimulated by the technique of the woodcut in 1906, when he was a member of the group, Die Brücke. Of his 500 prints, 200 are woodcuts executed before and during World War I. *Woman in Profile* is characterized by a powerful delineation of a striking physical type. In this, it differs from the later, more stylized and less particularized portraits of the Expressionists. Its slightly melancholic aura typifies Nolde's early work. The artist tended to print very limited editions. This particular print is from an unnumbered edition of nine and was hand-printed by Nolde or his wife. It is a significant and particularly fine addition to the Elvehjem's holdings in German prints of the early twentieth century.



Emil Nolde, *Woman in Profile*, 1910, woodcut, Members of the Elvehjem Museum of Art Fund purchase

MAY/JUNE

Exhibitions

Oil Sketches from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1816-1863
The Modern Print in Germany: 1881-1949
Five Women Artists: A Southern California Perspective
Alvin Langdon Coburn: A Retrospective
Recent Acquisitions

Concerts

Pro Arte Quartet
Dolce Trio
Barbara Bogatin, cello and Sharan Leventhal, violin

Artworks of the Month

Ed Paschke, Prothesian
Etruscan Mirror

Lectures

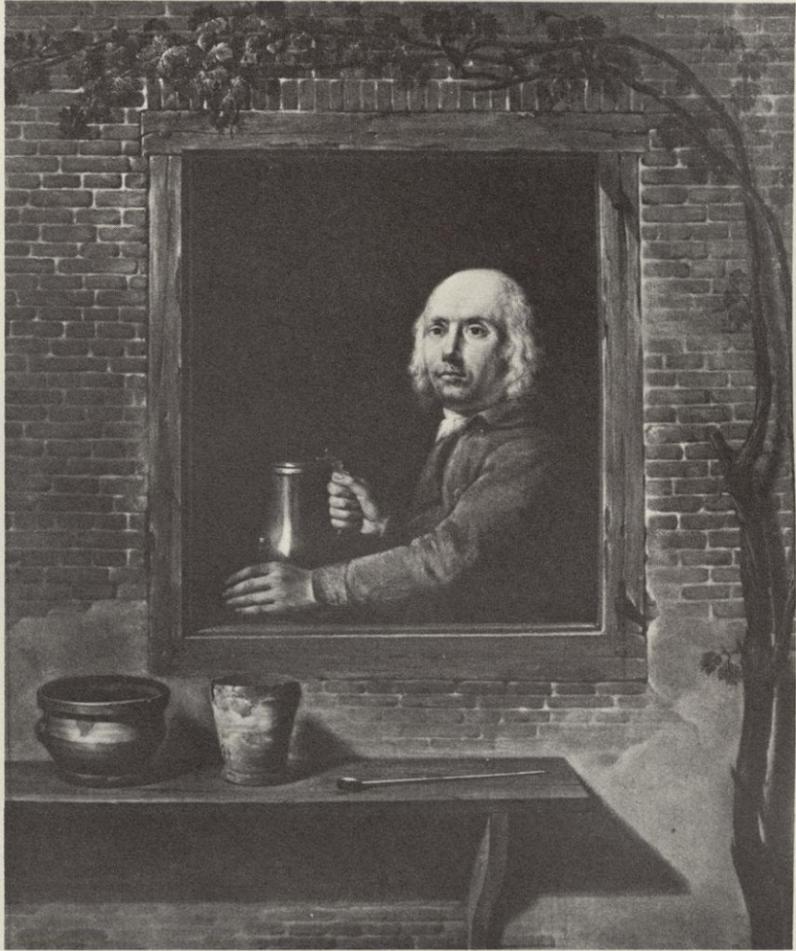
Jeffrey Morin, "The Artist's Book as Medium"
Symposium: Oil Sketches from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts
Amy Henderson, "Grand Illusions: Hollywood Portraits of the 1920s and 30s"
Barbara Kaerwer, "Expressionism and Neo-Expressionism: Déjà-vu?"

Trip

Members travel to Chicago International Art Exposition

NEW AT THE ELVEHJEM

New at the Elvehjem is *Man at a Window*, a recent gift from Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader. This small painting on panel, attributed to Martin Drolling (1752–1817), depicts a middle-aged man with long gray hair, seated at a window and holding a pewter stein. The window frame, which repeats the frame of the painting, is set within a brick wall decorated by an ivy plant and a shelf on which rest two pots. The climbing ivy adds a natural touch and further frames the subject. Drolling, a Frenchman, born in Oberbergheim near Colmar, became one of several painters celebrated in Paris for their skill in recreating the effect of the Dutch “little masters” of the seventeenth century. Such paintings, suggesting that the picture is itself a “window into nature,” belong to an interesting sub-genre. Drolling used the same illusionistic device (borrowed from Gerard Dou) in other works. The Elvehjem is fortunate to be able to add to its holdings this small panel which illustrates two developments: seventeenth-century illusionism and its nineteenth century emulations.



Martin Drolling (attributed to), *Man at a Window*, oil on panel, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader

Artwork of the Month

The Artwork of the Month for May is *Prothesian*, a large painting by the contemporary American painter

Ed Paschke. Of Polish-American descent, Paschke was born in Chicago where he attended the school

of the Art Institute. His art at first fit into the general mold of the figurative Chicago painters sometimes



Ed Paschke, *Prothesian*, 1982, oil on canvas, Anonymous Loan (Photograph: William Bengtson)

The Elvehjem

From the Director

At a time when federal support for the arts is becoming increasingly scarce, it is gratifying for me to be able to announce that the Elvehjem has been awarded two grants totaling \$65,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts Museum Program. One grant provides \$25,000 for completion of the documentation and cataloging of the Van Vleck Collection of Japanese woodblock prints. The second grant provides \$40,000 for the reinstallation of the Ancient Gallery, described in the January/February *Artscene*.

The need for the documentation project was intensified in December 1984, when Mrs. John H. Van Vleck gave the Elvehjem another 1,000 Japanese woodblock prints—the remainder of her deceased husband's collection. The grant monies will be used to incorporate this latest gift

into the collection and complete the documentation needed to make this fine donation more accessible for study and the effective organization of temporary exhibitions. The grant will also enable us to have the prints photographed in preparation for an eventual catalogue of the collection.

Now consisting of 3,936 prints, the Van Vleck collection, which represents 29% of the Museum's permanent holdings, is the third largest university collection of Japanese prints in the world. It is superseded only by the Fogg Museum at Harvard University and the collection at Keio and Waseda Universities in Tokyo. It has already proved to be most popular with Elvehjem visitors and a great resource for the scholarly community.

The second NEA grant allows the Elvehjem to reinstall its ancient collection in a totally redesigned space.

The new design of the gallery will reinforce the fact that the ancient collection is unique and different within the context of the Elvehjem's other holdings. Special educational materials including maps, extended introductory labels, and schematic charts explaining the function and development of the objects will contribute an educational dimension to the enhanced display.

National Endowment for the Arts grants are awarded by the Federal Government on a dollar-for-dollar matching basis. Although the documentation of the Japanese woodblock prints can begin immediately, thanks to a generous endowment for the care of the collection provided by the Van Vlecks, the reinstallation of the Ancient Gallery will have to be delayed until the Elvehjem can raise the necessary matching monies.

Russell Panczenko

called "The Imagists." In his work of the 1960s and 70s, Paschke created eccentric portraits of the city's fringe population dressed in gaudy clothes, heavily made-up or tattooed. Gradually, his art became less socially provocative and took on a more theatrical quality. The people in his portraits of the 1980s appear to be wearing masks and to inhabit a garish fantasy world. They often have indistinct features or complete voids where mouths or eyes should be.

In his large, neon-bright canvases Paschke creates the look of video or manipulated photographic images. The faces and hands in *Prothesian* are outlined in "neon" but they dissolve as in a fading video image. (Etymologically, "prothesis" means "placing before or in public.") What is placed before the faces of these indistinct personae and hence most accessible to the viewer is the mode of concealment: hands and glasses. The effect is mysterious; for these two faces are at once up front and concealed behind the dominant gesturing hands. With their elegant fingers and fashionable sun glasses, they suggest a glamorous setting though the distortions of the faces are also menacing. The only vestige of an earlier photo-realist style are the ears, suggestive of a strange wear-



Etruscan, *Handmirror* (detail), ca. 300 B.C., Earl O. Vits Endowment and Members of the Elvehjem Museum of Art Funds purchase

ness. These figures, who may be sitting in a café or restaurant, function as an audience within this silent but electric scene.

In June the Artwork of the Month is an Etruscan tang mirror purchased in 1986. It was illustrated on the first page of *Artscene* 2/4 and is the subject of an Elvehjem *Bulletin* article by

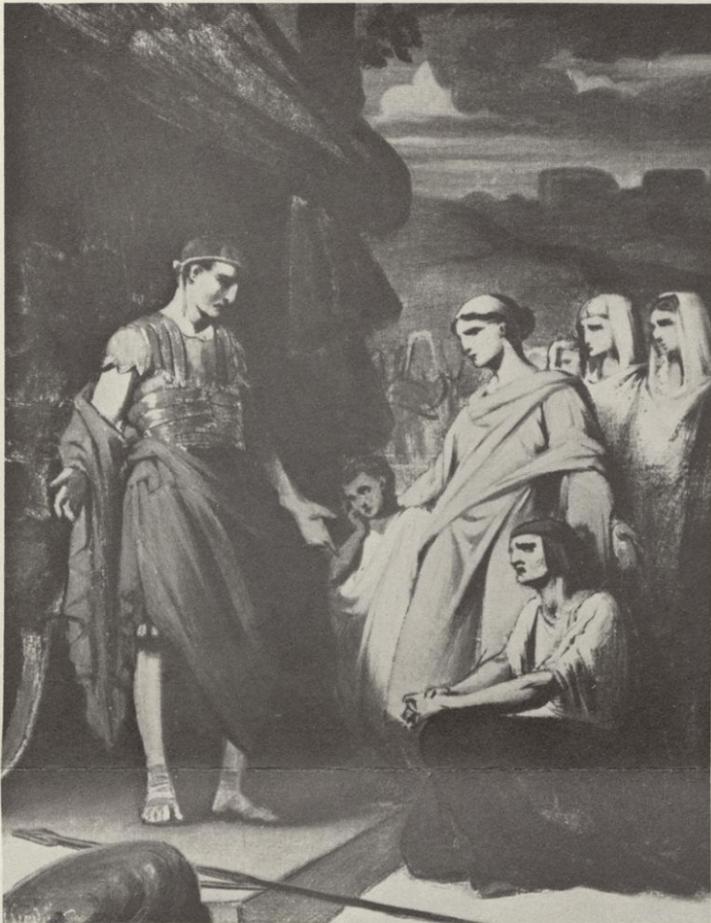
Professor Richard Daniel De Puma. The mirror dates from ca. 300 B.C. Its engraved (reverse) side depicts a Dionysian scene with a dancing satyr, a maenad and a "Lasa," one of a group of supernatural spirits or godlings who frequently appear on Etruscan mirrors.

The Elvehjem

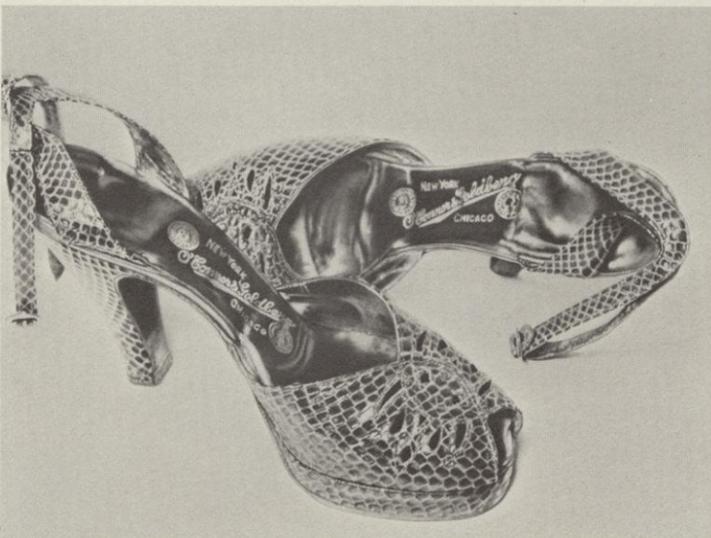
EXHIBITIONS

French Oil Sketches, Coburn Photographs, and Five Women Artists

Those members who have not had the opportunity to view the exhibition *Oil Sketches from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1816–1863* should be sure to do so before it closes on May 17. Comprising over 160 small paintings, this is the Elvehjem's major exhibition of the year. It is also one of the



Francois-Léon Benouville, *Veturia Throws Herself at Coriolanus's Feet*, oil on canvas (from the exhibition *Oil Sketches from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*)



Alexia Markarian, *O'Connor and Goldberg*, 1985, acrylic on canvas (from the exhibition *Five Women Artists: A Southern California Perspective*)

most unusual, since these paintings were produced as entries in a biannual competition at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the official French art academy. They were never intended to be placed on public view. In this competition, each of the ten or so student contestants was assigned a booth in a large room, where he produced in seven hours an oil sketch on an assigned subject. Each student was expected to be sufficiently familiar with classical mythology, Biblical stories, and ancient history to respond without notes. The resulting paintings, many of which are surprisingly complete and finished by today's standards, reveal the principles of line, color, composition, and painting technique which young artists were taught.

The paintings in this exhibition were lent by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Paris. Its presentation at the Elvehjem was made possible by support from the Evjue Foundation, Inc., the University of Wisconsin-Madison Humanistic Foundation Committee, and Air France. Members are invited to attend a symposium on the exhibition on May 3, at 2 p.m.; for details, see page 6.

The Elvehjem is pleased to present the exhibition, *Alvin Langdon Coburn: A Retrospective*, a survey of over 100 of Coburn's photographs from 1900 to 1917, drawn from the extensive Coburn archives at the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House. The exhibition opens on May 30 and runs through July 19. It includes Coburn's early portraits of famous men and women, his impressive cityscapes of London and New York, dramatic landscapes of the American West, and the experimental "vortographs," made with mirrors and bits of glass. The exhibition was made possible by a grant from the UW-Madison Humanistic Foundation Committee.

Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882–1966) is remembered today as one of photography's early masters and great innovators. A member of several key photographic movements, including the Linked Ring Brotherhood and the Photo-Secession, Coburn was a pivotal figure in a time

of great cultural upheaval. He left the United States for London at the turn of the century, but subsequently travelled back and forth across the Atlantic, establishing a wide circle of acquaintances in the art and literary worlds. Alfred Stieglitz, F. Holland Day, Henry James, George Bernard Shaw, and Ezra Pound were among the many famous contemporaries he photographed. Early in his career, Coburn was strongly influenced by the compositional principles derived by Arthur Wesley Dow from Japanese prints. With Dow, then the foremost art teacher in America, Coburn later collaborated. Many of Coburn's photographs, especially his *Wapping*, 1904, show his thorough understanding of Dow's principles.

Coburn was also deeply concerned with the symbolic content of his photographs. To help him achieve nonrealistic effects expressive of a deeper symbolic vision, he used the newly invented soft-focus lens and the platinum print. This allowed him to produce images that had clarity without sharpness and softness without fuzziness. This is especially apparent in the abstracted forms of his *Trafalgar Square*, 1905, *The Melting Pot, Pittsburgh*, 1910, and *The Octopus, New York*, 1912.

Fifteen drawings, etchings, watercolors and acrylic paintings by San Diego artists Alison Baldwin, Alexia Markarian, Kay Schwartz, Jennifer Spencer, and Lois Stecker will be featured in the Elvehjem's Whyte Lounge from May 9 through June 28 in the exhibition, *Five Women Artists: A Southern California Perspective*. The works of these artists were not chosen to illustrate any particular theme, but each of these women paints in a representational style, and their images are all drawn from a shared Southern Californian context—exotic flowers, poolside views, colorful patterns, and glittering apparel. The exhibition was organized by Gridlock Studios of San Diego.

The Elvehjem

MAY

2 Saturday

Lecture, "The Artist's Book as Medium," by Jeffrey Morin, Room 140, 8 p.m. (263-2256).

3 Sunday

Symposium, *Oil Sketches from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*. Speakers: Gabriel Weisberg (Univ. of Minnesota), Alexandra Murphy (Clark Art Institute), June Hargrove (Univ. of Maryland), Room 140, 2:00 p.m. (263-4421). A reception follows the Symposium.

Concert, Sunday Afternoon Live from the Elvehjem, Pro Arte Quartet, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

9 Saturday

Exhibition, *Five Women Artists: A Southern California Perspective*, opens in Whyte Gallery and runs through June 28.

Members Trip, Chicago International Art Exposition at Navy Pier, Susan Latton (263-2495).

10 Sunday

Concert, Sunday Afternoon Live from the Elvehjem, Dolce Trio, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

On Thursdays Docents will lead drop-in tours on the collections and exhibitions. The tours, given by Docents Catherine Bertucci (May 7), Dianne Tietjen (May 14 and 21), Marion Stemmler (May 28), Jane Pizer (June 4 and 11), and DeEtte Beilfuss (June 18 and 25), will begin at 11 a.m. in Paige Court.

Every Sunday at 3 p.m. (or following the concert), Docents will give ten-minute talks on the Artwork of the Month: Henryka Schutta (May 3), Barbara Klokner (May 10 and 17), Lucienne Klipstein (May 24), Irmgard Carpenter (May 31 and June 21), Diane Tietjen (June 7 and 14), and Beverly Dougherty (June 28).

17 Sunday

Exhibition, *Oil Sketches from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1816-1863*, closes.

Concert, Sunday Afternoon Live from the Elvehjem, Barbara Bogatin, cello and Sharan Leventhal, violin, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

20 Wednesday

Lecture, "Expressionism and Neo-Expressionism: Déjà vu?" by Barbara Kaerwer, for the Elvehjem Museum League's annual luncheon meeting, Room 130, 10 a.m. Open to the public (263-2495).

25 Monday

Museum closed in observance of Memorial Day.

30 Saturday

Exhibition, *Alvin Langdon Coburn: A Retrospective*, opens in Gallery IV and runs through July 19.

31 Sunday

Lecture, "Grand Illusions: Hollywood Portraits of the 1920s and 30s," by Amy Henderson, Assistant Historian at the National Portrait Gallery, Room 160, 2 p.m. Tickets at \$3 are required. Sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. To receive an application, call 263-4421.

JUNE

7 Sunday

Exhibition, *The Modern Print in Germany: 1881-1949* closes.

20 Saturday

Exhibition, *Recent Acquisitions*, opens in Mayer Gallery and runs through August 16.

28 Sunday

Exhibition, *Five Women Artists: A Southern California Perspective*, closes.



Alvin Langdon Coburn, *Vortograph*, 1917, gelatin silver print (from the exhibition *Alvin Langdon Coburn: A Retrospective*)

EDUCATION

**Symposium:
Oil Sketches from
the Ecole des Beaux-Arts,
1816-1863**
Room 140 at 2 p.m.

On Sunday, May 3 at 2 p.m. three speakers will each present a twenty-minute illustrated lecture related to the French oil sketches produced between 1816 to 1863 at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Gabriel Weisberg (Professor and Chair of Art History at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities) will speak on "*Esquisse or Ebauche: What Makes the Academic Sketch Tick?*" He will focus on the function of the sketch in the evolution of French academic painting in the nineteenth century. Alexandra Murphy, Curator of Painting at the Clark Art Institute, will discuss "*Jean-François Millet: Revolution within the Academic Tradition.*" A specialist on nineteenth-century French sculpture, June Hargrove (Associate Professor at the University of Maryland), will discuss "*The Weight of Tradition: The Academy and the Sculptor.*"

The three twenty-minute lectures will be followed by a panel discussion by the lecturers and Robert Beetem (UW's own nineteenth-century expert) and Robert Grilley,

painter and teacher in the UW Department of Art.

A reception outside room 140 will follow the symposium.

Docent Attends National Symposium

Museum staff members benefit from the contacts and stimulation afforded by professional meetings. On a different level, it is also important that Docents, as extensions of the staff, have the opportunity to meet and talk with their peers from other museums. The National Docent Symposium, a biennial forum, met at the Toledo Museum of Art March 24-26. The theme of the 1987 Docent Symposium was "kaleidoscope," a term that conveyed the Symposium's intent: to share with, listen to and reach out to other Docents and to form new patterns of learning and of teaching the museum visitor. Marion Stemmler attended this convention as our Docents' elected representative under the auspices of The University League. She participated in two small group sessions on each of the

three days. "Every session," says Marion, "was thought-provoking and very stimulating." Spending three days at one of the most interesting museums in the Mid-west, exchanging ideas with Docents from all over the States and Canada, listening to experts in museumship on what the volunteer educator as leader, learner and teacher can accomplish made this an extremely valuable experience for Marion, who hopes to share everything she has learned with her fellow Docents.

Over the last five years several other Docents have represented our group at these national meetings: Virginia Dymond, Carolyn Gaebler, Fran Rall, and Susan Stanek at the Milwaukee Art Museum in 1983; and Ingrid Russell and Margy Walker at the Oakland Museum in 1985.

Lectures

The Smithsonian Comes to Elvehjem with the lecture "Grand Illusions: Hollywood Portraits of the 1920s and 30s."

Even more influential than the movies they made, the dramatic studio photos of America's film stars established their public image. Garbo's mystery, Gable's irresistible charm and Dietrich's heavy-lidded sensuality were artfully created by Hollywood photographers whose works are now considered masterpieces in the medium. In a lecture illustrated by memorable photographs from this glamorous era, Amy Henderson, Assistant Historian at the National Portrait Gallery, will explore the relationship between Hollywood's stars and the myth-making photographs that catapulted

them into enduring fame. The lecture, which is related to an exhibition opening at the Elvehjem on August 29 (*Hollywood Glamour, 1924-1956*), will be given on Sunday, May 31 at 2 p.m. in room 160. It is sponsored by the Smithsonian National Associates Lecture and Seminar Program. Please note that *admission is by \$3 ticket only*. You may request a

descriptive brochure and ticket order form for all "Smithsonian Comes to Madison" activities, including the "Grand Illusions" lecture, by calling the Elvehjem at 263-4421, or by contacting the Office of Public Information, 19 Bascom, 262-3521. A commemorative poster will be on sale at various locations on campus.


MAY 27-JUNE 1

The Elvehjem

MEMBERSHIP

League's Annual Meeting

The Elvehjem League's annual luncheon meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 20. Barbara Kaerwer from Eden Prairie, Minnesota, will be the special guest speaker. The title of her lecture is "Expressionism and Neo-Expressionism: Déjà vu?" (at 10 a.m. in room 130). A luncheon and annual business meeting will follow at the University Club (803 State Street), at 11:30 a.m.

Barbara Kaerwer, a graduate of UW-Madison (class of '42), is a current member of the Elvehjem Council. She attended graduate school at the University of Minnesota and worked in the Education Division of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts from 1956 to 1971 as a Senior Lecturer, teaching courses and giving public lectures on a variety of topics relating to the Institute's varied collections. Since 1971, she has continued her involvement in the world of art by giving free-lance courses and leading international tours which she says are "spin-offs from these

courses." Barbara Kaerwer's special interest is German Expressionism, the focus of the exhibition that opened in the Mayer Gallery on April 18 and will run through June 7.

Invitations with reservation cards will be mailed to League members. Guests are welcome. For additional information call Pat Register, Enrichment Program Chair (767-2279).

Members Travel to International Expo

On Saturday, May 9 members will again visit the international art market in Chicago where over 150 prominent dealers display the work of major contemporary artists along with works by European and American masters of earlier centuries. Brochures were mailed to members who may call Audry Giles (233-2307) or Susan Latton (263-2495) if they require additional information.

Join the Elvehjem

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Home Phone/Business Phone _____

Membership Categories

- Associate \$250
- Founder 100
- Family 40
- Individual 25
- Senior, Student 15

Please charge to my:

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- Mastercard

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Signature _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
(Made payable to the Elvehjem Museum of Art.)

Return this form to:
Elvehjem Museum of Art
Membership Program
800 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
(608)263-2495

Staff Notes

The half-time position of Museum Shop manager has been filled by Sandy Schweiger of Madison. Prior to her appointment, Sandy served as the shop's assistant manager. She has been associated with the Elvehjem, in various capacities, since the fall of 1983, when she resumed her studies in botany. She holds a degree in Forestry from UW-Madison.

Sandy's most immediate plans involve developing products that will increase the Museum's national exposure. She has already initiated a project with a well-known publisher to produce a book of postcards of Japanese prints from the Van Vleck collection. Publication is anticipated in the fall of 1987.

In her spare time, Sandy, a free lance illustrator, is currently working on a botanical text with one of her former professors.

Louise Henning has recently retired as reference librarian in the Kohler Art Library. Early in 1970, before the Elvehjem was actually fin-



Sandy Schweiger

ished and after she had spent more than two decades as a reference librarian at Memorial Library, Louise was hired by Director William Bunce. They worked for six months in the basement of Music Hall, assessing the job ahead and planning for the future. In September they moved to the new facility which then housed the 40,000 volumes transferred from Memorial Library.

Since the Kohler Art Library's collection has more than doubled, Louise has witnessed many changes.

Though she has never belonged to the museum staff itself, she has been



Louise Henning

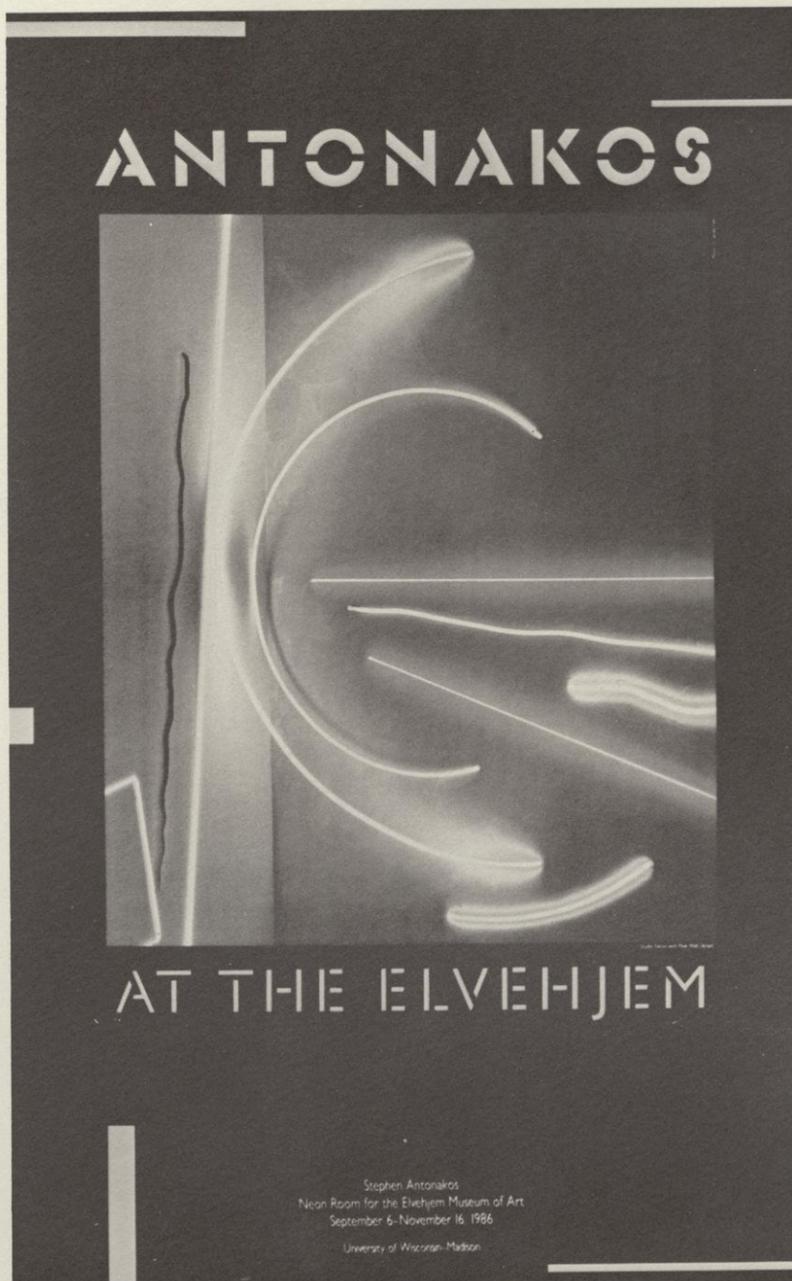
a major resource person for these sixteen years. Consistently and graciously, she has helped both the staff and the numerous Docent volunteers with a myriad of research tasks. We will miss her very much as a friend as well as in her capacity as full-time reference librarian.

Fortunately, Louise Henning's excellent reference skills are not entirely lost to the Elvehjem's staff. Starting this spring she will be helping Russell Panczenko, on a volunteer basis, with an ambitious research project.

The Elvehjem

Poster Wins Award

Antonakos at the Elvehjem, a poster designed by Earl Madden of UW Publications, has won a second place ADDY award in the category of Public Service Print Collateral Material given by the Madison Advertising Federation. The ADDY is a design award given in February of each year. This is the third year in a row that an Elvehjem publication has won top honors.



Elvehjem Museum of Art
800 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53706



Gallery Hours:

Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

Museum Shop Hours:

Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

Kohler Art Library Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-9:45 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday 1-4:45 p.m.

For library hours during UW
holiday periods call (608) 263-2258

Information: (608) 263-2246

Admission is free

artscene

May/June 1987

Important Dated Information!



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